

NORTHWEST connexion CHALLENGE



FAQ

WHO IS CONNEXION?

Connexion is one of the largest General Agencies in Washington State¹ serving the Northwest for over 30 years. We help seniors, businesses and self-employed individuals and families find insurance plans that fit their needs, budget and lifestyle. Connexion partners with hundreds of brokers in the Northwest and is part of a family of companies providing health plan services to more than 2 million members.

WHY ARE SENIORS IMPORTANT TO CONNEXION?

Connexion is passionate about helping seniors. Traditionally, we have done that by guiding seniors through the Medicare landscape. We have provided Medicare education and enrollment support for over **20,000** seniors in the Pacific Northwest. What fuels our passion is when a customer tells us they had an important need to use their health coverage and they appreciate that they had a plan which helped get them through a stressful situation.

WHY DID CONNEXION DECIDE TO CREATE THIS HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHALLENGE?

In the last year, we became aware of **two health and wellness issues** impacting seniors:

- *the impact of loneliness on health and*
- *the potential to use nutrition to treat multiple common chronic health conditions*

Although we could have continued to focus on helping seniors in our traditional way, we decided as a company to step outside the box. This was an opportunity to care for the whole person on top of their Medicare needs. We serve a significant senior population in the area. We felt that since we care about our customers as people that we should do something about these issues.

WHO ARE DRs. DEAN AND AYESHA SHERZAI?

The Sherzai's are the Directors of the Alzheimer's Prevention Program at Loma Linda University Medical Center. Eating a plant-based diet and having strong social connections are two of the key components to the groundbreaking lifestyle program, NEURO, they developed to prevent Alzheimer's. Connexion is thrilled to have the Sherzai's participate in the campaign, which gives participants incredible access to learn from and engage with two world renown medical experts. The Sherzai's will be having weekly live calls where they will share components of their NEURO program as well as answer questions. They will also be checking in through the month and will provide educational materials.



¹ According to 2020 Puget Sound Business Journal list of largest Insurance brokerages

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTS ABOUT SENIOR LONELINESS PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW?

First of all, there should not be any negative stigma or embarrassment to feeling isolated or lonely. It is common amongst people of all ages.

- *Published studies indicate that somewhere between **33% to 43%** of seniors are impacted.*
- *From a health perspective, it's incredibly damaging as health experts equate it to being as detrimental as smoking **15 cigarettes** a day or being obese.*

WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTS ABOUT PLANT-BASED NUTRITION PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW?

- *From the National Council of Aging: **8 out of 10 seniors** have at least one chronic condition while nearly **7 out of 10** have two or more.*
- *Heart disease is the **number one** killer of Americans affecting about a third of the population.*
- *Diabetes, hyper-tension and Alzheimer's are other examples affecting many **millions** of people.*

These are all conditions that the leading physician experts in the world believe can be managed effectively through plant-based nutrition. The power of plant-based nutrition is that it helps manage and prevent multiple chronic conditions.

WHAT IS PLANT-BASED EATING?

We're recommending what is referred to as a **whole-food plant-based diet**. The staples of this diet include:

- *Whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, whole wheat bread, wild rice*
- *Beans, legumes and nuts such as lentil, chickpeas, black beans, tofu, almonds*
- *All vegetables and fruits*

Eating plant-based doesn't mean you have to go 100% from the start. It's recommended for most people to ease into it by including more of the staples above and gradually replace processed foods and animal proteins. The more you eat whole-food plant-based, the more you benefit, but it is most important to develop a healthy lifestyle that is

sustainable. We will help people learn that a whole-food plant-based diet can be delicious as well as life changing for your health.

WHY ADDRESS LONELINESS AND PLANT-BASED NUTRITION TOGETHER?

Improving health and longevity is multi-faceted. There's no magic supplement or pill you can take. Longevity research on places such as the Blue Zones has shown that an overall healthy lifestyle plays a critical role in people living longer lives with less disease. When we became aware of the specific issues of loneliness and plant-based nutrition, that sparked the idea to combine them. We could encourage people to go plant-based...**together**. For some people, one issue might be more relevant than the other, so people are free to focus on what's most important to them. Especially during this time of COVID-19 where isolation has intensified, we felt like people could benefit from this type of community activity.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

The focus of the campaign is on seniors; however, people of any age are encouraged to participate and join the Facebook community. Loneliness and chronic conditions affect people in all age groups. We think it's a great activity for inter-generational family members to try together.

ARE THERE ANY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING?

There is absolutely no cost to participate. Information will be shared via a Facebook Social Group. We'll also share the info from our website if you don't want to use Facebook, but Facebook is recommended so people can take full advantage of the campaign by sharing their experience, making connections and engaging with others and Drs. Sherzai.



WHAT ARE PEOPLE BEING CHALLENGED TO DO?

We are going to challenge people to make new social connections and eat more plant-based meals. The campaign is going to facilitate those main goals in a variety of ways including education and a variety of online activities. In just 30 days, we believe anyone can take significant steps towards a healthier lifestyle.

HOW DO YOU JOIN THE NORTHWEST CONNEXION CHALLENGE?

It's easy! All you have to do join our **Northwest Connexion Challenge Facebook Group**. This group is carefully curated and moderated to ensure that you are only getting the best information related to enriching your challenge experience. Once you become a member you will have instant access to an almost countless amount of resources and be able to connect with others in your area.

WHAT WILL YOU GET BY JOINING THE FACEBOOK GROUP?

Being a member of the group means that you have exclusive access to weekly recipes, helpful tips, live Q& A sessions, information from world-class neurologists, and so much more! Plus, being a member of the group means that you can easily connect with other participants in your area and stay up to date with other member's progress. It's a great way to learn from others and share the successes that are making you smile.

CAN YOU START LATE?

Yes you can! We'd love to have everyone in on day one but sometimes schedules don't line up. Feel free to join us at any time during the 30 days to participate in as much of the challenge as you can.

CAN YOU LEAVE THE GROUP AT ANY TIME?

Of course! Facebook makes it easy to leave the group at any point. However, by leaving the group you will no longer have access to the amazing resources. That said, you can absolutely rejoin at any time if you do decide to leave.

